



Herb Kohl
Educational Foundation

News Release



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Roger King of Holmen to represent Wisconsin in National Teacher of the Year competition

Herb Kohl Educational Foundation will award \$6,000 to Wisconsin's National Teacher of the Year nominee

MADISON — Roger King, an agriscience teacher at Holmen High School and Wisconsin's 2015-16 High School Teacher of the Year, will represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year program.

“Roger King is a recognized leader in the Farm to School movement. He is a great mentor to beginning teachers and knows his success depends on others,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “One administrator described him as being all about working with others. He is Mr. Collaboration and will be a solid representative of Wisconsin's teaching force in the National Teacher of the Year program.”

King was named Wisconsin's High School Teacher of the Year in a surprise ceremony at his school in early September. He received a Kohl Teacher Fellowship last spring. As part of the honor of representing Wisconsin in the National Teacher of the Year program, King will receive \$6,000 from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation. Established in 1990 by Herb Kohl, philanthropist, businessman, and former U.S. Senator, the foundation has given approximately \$10.4 million to Wisconsin educators, students, and schools since its founding. The total award King will receive from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation is \$12,000.

“Teachers have such important work, developing young people into educated citizens who are ready to take their place in society and the workforce,” Kohl said. “It is my honor to support the Teacher of the Year program, and in this way, demonstrate the profound respect I have for teachers and their efforts to help all children achieve.”

Described as “a resourceful innovator,” King's teaching philosophy centers around practical application of learning principles. He said he teaches his students to “investigate real world issues and problems, develop research and questioning skills, develop problem solving skills” and gather “knowledge through a hands-on approach to each lesson.” King changed the school's traditional greenhouse operation that grew bedding plants to one that grows lettuce hydroponically. “This change required students to completely rethink how plants grow and exposed them to a system that can be used for year-round production,” he said. In addition to lettuce, the school's greenhouse supplies the Farm to School program with broiler chickens, potatoes, and sweet corn for the school lunch program.

(more)

King engages high school students with special needs in the greenhouse, having them plant and harvest the hydroponic lettuce. Additionally, students in an occupational training class help with stocking coolers and shelves in the FFA concession stand and setting up and counting the money box to connect with math lessons.

King's "Suitcase Lessons" are self-contained activity-based units. Among the lessons is "Skin/Skull/Scat/Tracks" which teaches about game animals in Wisconsin. The "White Egg Yolk Experiment" lets students explore the impact of ingredients in chicken feed on the laying hens' eggs. Students discover that low levels of carotene in the feed cause the yolk to lose its color and become white, while high levels of carotene cause an orange yolk.

King also believes parent involvement is essential for student success. "I engage parents by having them on my Agriscience Advisory Committee so I can have a parent perspective on lessons the students are involved in and to make sure that future career interests are covered in the classroom. I also invite parents on field trips to give them a better understanding of the curriculum and the industries that support the curriculum I teach," he says. In a letter submitted by a colleague, King's approach is described as "not a 'drop your kids at the door' philosophy. He knows we are a better society when parents, children, and community all come together for the greater good."

He carries his passion for what he teaches in the classroom into several community service activities. Annually, King volunteers at the La Crosse dairy breakfast supervising 4-H and FFA students as they serve more than 2,000 attendees. He also volunteers as a master gardener in his school gardens, serves as the Holmen FFA adviser, has been a 4-H leader for 16 years, coaches football, and serves as the co-chair for the La Crosse County Interstate Fair Small Animal Barn Committee.

King holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture education from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and he earned a master's degree in professional development from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

King is one of [four Teachers of the Year chosen to represent Wisconsin's PK-12 teaching corps](#) for the 2015-16 school year. The others are **Suzanne Devine**, a seventh- and eighth-grade science and social studies teacher at Northstar Middle School in the Eau Claire Area School District, Middle School Teacher of the Year; **Amy Reed**, a special education teacher at Kimberly High School in the Kimberly Area School District, Special Services Teacher of the Year; and **Mai Shoua Xiong**, a first-grade teacher at the Academy of Accelerated Learning, a Milwaukee Public Schools International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme School, Elementary Teacher of the Year.

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NOTES: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2015_92.pdf.